

FLORIDA NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY



Dream. Believe. Achieve.



CLASS 35

PARENT HANDBOOK



Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to Florida Youth Challenge Academy! The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information and to familiarize you with the rules, policies, and procedures of the Academy. Florida Youth Challenge Academy has dedicated its most experienced and qualified members to provide extensive support to your son or daughter and families for over fourteen years. Your son or daughter will be well cared for through the extended efforts of the “FLYCA Team” which is composed of experienced Cadre, Staff, Counselors, and Teachers. We will do everything in our power to elevate your son’s or daughter’s academic level, improve self-esteem, and continue your efforts in teaching them the basic skills essential for a productive life. The Academy has been in existence for over 17 years and successfully graduated over 4,791 Cadets.

Please take the time to read the Parent Handbook and feel free to contact the Academy if you have any questions regarding the Cadet tenure. I fully recognize that family members are all important participants and the more you understand how the Academy works and what to expect, the better your son’s or daughter’s chances will be for success.

Thank you for entrusting your son or daughter to Florida Youth Challenge Academy for the next several months during this period of challenge and change.

James R. Ransom

Program Director

Florida Youth Challenge Academy

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Hours of Operation

Normal hours of operation for administrative staff and counselors are 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday (excluding holidays). The Cadre provides supervision for the Cadets 24 hours a day, seven days a week during the cycle.

Website: floridayouthchallengeacademy.org

The website has additional information about the Academy. Photos of the Cadets taken throughout the class will be posted on the website periodically along with other pertinent information.

Phone Calls

During the Acclimation Phase, Candidates are not allowed to make phone calls. After the Rites of Passage ceremony, when the Candidate becomes a full-fledged Cadet, he or she earns the privilege of one (1) phone call per week. This phone call is no more than ten (10) minutes long and made from a dial-out only phone. There are no phone calls during the week of placement passes.

Phone calls are not monitored for content by the staff. However, the staff do encourage the Cadets to call home. Many Cadets call friends or girlfriends/boyfriends during their phone time. If you have a concern about the welfare of your child because you have not heard from them, you can call the Counseling Department at 904-559-1726 ext 2170. These phones are not monitored 24/7 so please call during regular business hours (Mon.-Fri., 8:00 am-5:00 pm).

If a family emergency should arise, please call 904-559-1726 ext 2170 during normal working hours (8:00 am – 5:00 pm) or after hours (5:00 pm – 8:00 am) please call 904-449-5488/866-796-7187 to reach a Shift Supervisor who can direct your call. Remember, one reason the Cadet is here is for a distraction-free learning environment. Therefore, unnecessary phone calls from home only cause emotional distress and disrupt the learning environment for the Cadet. Please call only if a **SERIOUS** emergency has arisen.

Cadets who are placed on the Operational Rehabilitation Squad (ORS) for disciplinary reasons are not authorized their weekly call. The counselor of the Cadet's respective platoon will notify

the family with information concerning the disciplinary action to include the recommended time frame of the action. The Commandant has the authority to remove a Cadet early from ORS and allow phone calls based on behavior.

How to Contact your Cadet

Parents/Guardians, please write or email to your Cadet often while at the Academy. Receiving mail from home is highly anticipated. Cadets can receive mail and e-mail beginning day one. Parents are encouraged to mail a letter or send an email to their Candidate the Thursday before Admission Day. Day one is the most stressful day for the candidates and letters make the transition easier. If the relationship with your child is strained, encouraging words from you will go a long way in mending the relationship and aiding in their successful completion of the Youth Challenge Program. Parents/guardians are not allowed to communicate or pass letters for their Cadets to other Cadets in the program or terminated Cadets; if this occurs, the Cadet will be disciplined for fraternization.

E-mail the Candidate/Cadet

E-mails sent to your Candidate/Cadet will be delivered by the end of the business day, Monday through Friday; this does not include weekends and holidays. To e-mail your Candidate/Cadet, use the following website address: floridayouthchallengeacademy.org and click to send a **message at the bottom of site**. Include the Candidate/Cadet's name (last name, first name) and platoon number in the subject line. Do not include photos as these will not be printed. This is a one-way communication; your Candidate/Cadet cannot send e-mail messages.

U.S. Postal Mail Services

Candidates/Cadets can receive letters from family and friends through the United States Postal Service using the following procedures and address:

Candidate/Cadet (Last Name, First Name), Platoon (1, 2, 3 or 4) (All females are in 1st Platoon)
C/O FLYCA
5629 State Road 16 West, Bldg 3800
Starke, FL 32091

Every week the Cadets have time set aside to write parents and mentors. There is no reason for the Cadet to neglect writing you. Cadets always need stamps so feel free to send those in the letters you write. Please be aware of upsetting your Cadet with unnecessary bad news in letters; contact the Counseling Department if there is a family emergency.

Care Packages

Cadets can receive care packages to replace athletic shoes, underwear, T-shirts, shoe shine kits, deodorant, toothpaste, stamps, locks, socks, etc. Do not send laundry detergent, bleach, or fabric softener unless requested to do so by medical personnel. If in doubt as to whether or not to send an item, call 904-559-1726 extensions 4000/3042 during normal business hours.

Contraband items include but are not limited to:

- Food of any type. This will be confiscated and your Cadet will not be allowed to consume any food items.
- Cell phone, USB or any digital device (i.e. Ipad, Ipad)
- Magazines with sexually suggestive pictures, including bathing suits. These will be confiscated and sent back to you.
- Photographs. Cadets are only allowed photos during the challenge phase, once he or she has earned Cadet status.
- Do not send any type of medication to include over the counter items such as Tylenol, cold medicine, and unless requested through the Medical Department.
- Mouthwash containing alcohol

Visits

There are no unauthorized visits from anyone during the Residential phase. The Cadet's schedule varies day-to-day, and he or she may not be on campus if you just show up. There is a "Family Day" event in the beginning of the session. Family Day will be the only time you will be able to visit your Cadet while they are at the Academy. No terminated Cadet, regardless of the relationship, is authorized to visit or participate in any event sponsored by the Academy. More information about Family Day will be posted on the Academy website.

Finances

Throughout the class, you will receive paperwork outlining several products for sale (i.e. backpacks, jackets etc.) as well as events that will require payment. If you desire to purchase the items or make a donation to the Florida Youth Challenge Academy, payment must be in Cash or Money Order only, **personal checks are not accepted**. If mailing the payment, please include the form that goes along with the order so we can ensure that the payment is credited correctly. On each form, there will be a designated individual that it must be sent to. Please **DO NOT send any type of payment or cash to your Cadet!**

Mailing Information for Payments:

**Florida Youth Challenge Academy
Attn: Assistant Budget Officer
5629 State Rd 16 West, Bldg 3800
Starke, FL 32091**

All financial questions should be directed to the financial officer at 904-559-1726 ext4037 or the Assistant Budget Officer at 904-559-1726 ext4027.

Placement Passes and Homework Assignments

Cadets will have two mandatory placement passes during the 5 ½ months of the Residential Phase in which they will return home. Placement is defined as participating in one of three activities (school, employment, or military) for a minimum of 30 hours per week. **Placement is a mandatory requirement for graduation.** During each placement pass every Cadet will be responsible for completing the following tasks relating to placement during each visit:

A) First Placement Pass

- (1) Complete 4 hours of service to the community with Mentor
- (2) Apply and physically interview (no on-line applications) for three jobs, even if he or she wishes to join the military or go to college
- (3) Work on the completion of the Post Residential Action Plan (P-RAP)

B) Second Placement Pass

- (1) Visit or communicate with Mentor to discuss future placement plans
- (2) Validate future plans with potential placement options identified during first placement pass

This is a job skill that Cadets have to participate in for class and will have a worksheet to complete as a homework assignment. The jobs Cadets apply for should also be the jobs he or she

would like to have as their primary or backup placement plan. As Cadets are hired, they should obtain a letter from the boss on company letterhead. The letter must state: the Cadet's name, date to begin work (within 2 weeks after graduation), starting pay, and how many hours he or she will be able to work per week. The letter must also include the supervisor's name and contact information. Placement must be verified in writing and confirmed by the Placement Coordinator (904-559-1726 ext4032).

PLEASE DO NOT ASK TO PICK UP YOUR CADET PRIOR TO THE SCHEDULED DEPARTURE TIME. IF YOU ARRIVE EARLY, YOU MUST WAIT. A VALID PHOTO IDENTIFICATION IS REQUIRED FROM ANY PERSON SIGNING OUT A CADET.

**Only adults over the age of 21 authorized for pick-up of Cadets on the admission application or emergency contact form will be able to pick up the Cadet.*

Emergency Situations

When a Cadet is injured while at the Academy, the Cadre member in charge will immediately examine the Cadet to determine the severity of the injury. The Cadre member will contact the Medical staff and follow their directions until the Medical staff arrives. The family will be notified about the injury and if an injury requires a visit to the emergency room or hospitalization. (See Medical Operations for more details).

Family Emergencies

Family members are urged to call the Academy if an emergency arises at home. When contacting the Academy regarding a family emergency, please notify the Counseling Department of any news that might be devastating or upsetting before the Cadet is notified. The appropriate Academy staff will always be present when bad news is presented to a Cadet. No emergency information will be relayed to a Cadet during the night. The Counselors are always available to speak with a Cadet if he or she chooses. The Director is the only person with the authority to approve or deny emergency passes. Emergency passes will only be considered in the event of death of an immediate family member (mother, father, sister, brother, or grandparent) pending proof of death notification/i.e. an obituary. No other passes will be considered. Family wedding,

reunion, vacation, cruises, graduation, religious activities, taking the SAT or ACT test, and job interviews are not family emergencies.

Medical Operations

Every Parent or Guardian is responsible for health care insurance and/or health care costs, co-pays, prescriptions, or treatments given by medical providers outside the Academy. The Academy has a full time nurse and medical assistants available. When the Academy is in progress, appointments must be scheduled when the Cadet is on home pass or after graduation. Permission for appointments on days other than scheduled passes will not be granted. Recurring appointments while in the program could result in termination from the program. Regular routine care should not be scheduled during the residential phase. It is the hope of the FLYCA Medical staff to put your mind at rest while your son or daughter is here.

FLYCA Medical staff is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If there are any issues that you have, please discuss them with our Medical staff. Medical Operations staff members take the job very seriously and intend to treat each Cadet appropriately. In addition, it is requested you remind your Cadet to check with Medical Operations for any and all illnesses or injuries they may report to you. The staff will be happy to answer any questions, you may have. If your Cadet tells you anything different from what you read here, please call FLYCA Medical Operations and discuss it with us at (904) 559-1726 ext4009.

Prescriptions/Medications

The Medical staff will supervise the distribution of medications. Each Cadet that is taking medications must come to the Academy with a (90) ninety-day supply of medication, or prescription refills. **Please do not send medication directly to your Cadet in the mail. Please do not send any prescription bottles of medication in the mail to the Medical Operations as it is unlawful. You have a few options to get medications for your cadet refilled:**

Option 1) Setup with your pharmacy to mail prescriptions directly to FLYCA. CVS, Walgreens, etc all will mail out prescriptions for you (*again it is illegal for a person to mail actual prescriptions, but pharmacies can*). Parents will be responsible for changing the address back to their own after graduation or in the event of a termination.

**Florida Youth Challenge Academy
ATTN: Medical Operations
5629 State Road 16 West, Bldg 3800
Starke, FL 32091**

Option 2) Mail the written prescription to the Medical Operations Department for your Cadet. Include what pharmacy (*Walgreens or CVS listed below*) your insurance covers and a gift card to that pharmacy if any co-pays are required.

CVS Pharmacy, 209 S. Temple Street, Starke, FL 32091, phone 904-964-7979
Walgreens Pharmacy, 205 Madison Street, Starke, FL 32091, phone 904-964-2389

Mail Prescriptions to:

Florida Youth Challenge Academy

ATTN: Medical Operations

5629 State Road 16 West, Bldg 3800

Starke, FL 32091

(Do not include Cadet's name on outside of the package)

Cadets that require daily prescription medications will need to have refills sufficient to last throughout the program. Certain medications that require a new prescription written each month, (i.e.: Concerta, Adderall, and other psychotropic medications) need to be discussed with your child's physician that a new prescription will need to be written each month **without** a doctor's visit.

Allergies

Antihistamines such as Claritin and Zyrtec are often given and are excellent medications to treat allergy symptoms. Many times the Cadets will react to changes in weather and/or the environment at FLYCA. There are different varieties of trees and plants here than what the Cadet may be accustomed to. Many react to this in the form of allergy type headaches, sinus issues, and/or ear infections secondary to sinus issues.

Appointments

MEDICAL OPERATIONS IS RESPONSIBLE FOR RECOMMENDING ALL MEDICAL AND DENTAL APPOINTMENTS TO THE DIRECTOR DURING THE PROGRAM.

The staff can evaluate and treat most of the minor issues seen. There are limited local dentists, orthopedists, and specialists available; if needed, you will be contacted by the staff for a referral. You then will be able to select a local doctor or your own. It is not required that you use the local doctor, but it is encouraged. Each time your Cadet is off campus, it counts against his or her school time.

Depo-Provera Injections

If your daughter has a Depo injection at her local doctor or health department, this care can be transferred to FLYCA to be administered by the nurse. The date of the last injection, a prescription and/or the medication will be needed. This arrangement must be taken care of prior to the beginning of the program, **only prefilled** Depo syringe prescriptions will be accepted (*your doctor and pharmacy will understand*). Oral and patch contraceptives may be continued, provided refills are available.

Braces

Orthodontist appointments are discussed on the day of orientation. No additional appointments for braces adjustment/repair will be arranged during the program except at placement pass. Dental wax and fill kits are acceptable to use until pass time and must be provided by the parents/guardians.

Eye Appointments

No additional appointments for eyeglass adjustment/repairs will be arranged during the program except at placement pass. Medical Operations will be evaluating Cadets' vision during the first week; if they require glasses, we may call you for a plan to obtain the glasses. If your Cadet has a second pair of glasses at home, please discuss where they are located and check that they are functional in the event you may need to send them to FLYCA.

Heat Injury/Illness

In the summer, heat related issues are of utmost importance. Every time you talk to your Cadet ask if they have been drinking water. Water is very plentiful and usually the only thing to drink.

Smoking Withdrawal

Smoking is a habit many of the Cadets practice before coming into the program. No smoking is allowed on campus. Sometimes the person may experience withdrawals from the sudden cessation of smoking. We do allow smoking cessation patches for the first 14 days on a step down process. The patches must be supplied by you, the parent /guardian. After the first two weeks, they will not be given. Our experience is that the 7 mg or 14 mg patch is the best suited for smoking cessation in teens. The higher 21 mg often makes the Cadets ill and is discontinued before completing the cessation.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, a call will be made to the nurse. A determination will be made if the Cadet requires an ambulance trip or needs to be transported by FLYCA to Shands at Starke Emergency Room to be evaluated. This can occur at any time of day or night. The nurses are available by cell phone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for the duration of the program. No matter what the outcome, you will be notified of the injury. If needed, you may be requested to come to the hospital, or the nurse may inform you she can call you back with the report of the outcome.

In the event the Cadet needs to go home to recuperate, the nurse will make a recommendation to the Director who gives the authorization and sets a time limit. It is imperative that the parents/guardian communicates with Medical Operations if the Cadet does not return by the time limit expected. FLYCA Candidates/Cadets are entitled to benefits covered by FECA (Federal Employees' Compensation Act) if injured in the performance of duty during their residency in our program (*injuries caused by horseplay or self inflicted injuries is not covered*) which is administered by the US Department of Labor. They are required to report any injury to the academy immediately and they have the right to file a claim. Injuries can be evaluated and treated by the nurse/PA on staff to eliminate the need for off campus treatment and loss of school time, which could result in termination from the program. If the injury needs to be evaluated and treated by a physician, the parent will be contacted. We can transport the Cadet to the local physician. Keep in mind that if you choose a physician that is not local, FLYCA cannot provide transportation and the loss of school time could be grounds for removal from the Academy.

Medical Terminations

Terminations of the Cadet from FLYCA on medical issues do not generally occur. However, there are certain medical conditions that must have limitations. Cadet with a seizure disorder must have the condition in control. Physician must sign off for the Cadet to attend the program. Cadet with diabetes, whether a new onset or with a long-standing history may be admitted to the program. However, once it becomes apparent the Cadet is unable to control the fluctuation of the blood sugar levels, medical termination may be necessary. It is important the Cadet knows diabetes is not a button to push when a task is difficult or a Cadre makes you mad. Diabetes is not a reason to have an attitude. Therefore, it will not be tolerated and the Cadet will be dealt with for the behavior, not the diabetes. An applicant with scoliosis may be admitted once the physician has approved the Candidate for the program. If the Candidate is not physically capable of doing the activities, due to pain or discomfort, a discussion with the nurse may take place to determine a plan for progression.

Education Department

FLYCA is designed to encourage students to stay in school and further their education as per one of the tracks noted on the sheet “FLYCA Education Tracks”. Students in the program will be enrolled in language arts, writing, math, science, and social studies and other appropriate courses. The curriculum will be individualized and will include employability skills, life management skills, and career exploration and awareness. Courses may be taught using individual, self-paced, computerized instruction as well as direct instruction by certified teachers. For students requiring extra assistance, tutoring is available upon request. Many students take advantage of this extra assistance with great success. Again, students must always be focused on why they are here. FLYCA does not offer ESE classes. Accommodations for GED testing can be requested through a process of application to the GED office in Tallahassee, Florida. All classes are taught in English only. The GED test can be administered in Spanish for Cadets that speak/read Spanish.

Counseling Department

The Counseling Department is responsible for assisting the Cadets with adapting to a new residential and academic environment. The counselors provide personal counseling to Cadets

with processing personal issues to meet goals, which includes retention counseling, administration and analysis of psychological indicators. The counselors conduct extensive evaluations of Cadet's progress and adjustment toward family, work and environment in order to determine potential areas to provide guidance services. General guidance is the only type of counseling available. The Academy is not a therapeutic setting that provides therapy or psychological counseling. The Counselors and Case Managers provide training and instruction in life coping and job skills during the twenty-two weeks.

Mental Health-Psychological/Psychiatric Appointments

All mental health appointments outside of FLYCA will be coordinated with the Counseling Department staff for approval by the Program Director. If it becomes apparent that there is a therapeutic need, then the parents/guardians will be notified with further instructions.

Emergency Mental Health Services (BAKER ACT)

All emergency mental health services will be facilitated through the Clay County Sheriff's Office and other facilities the agency deems necessary. With parental/guardian approval, referral assistance for other needed counseling may be provided to the Cadet and his/her family upon graduation or termination. The goal is for the Cadet to return to their community with the necessary skills needed to be successful.

Mentor Procedures

The mentor is a caring adult role model for your child to relate to during both phases of the Youth Challenge Program. Every applicant that is accepted to the program must have a Mentor ages 23 or older. The mentor is meant to play an impartial and supportive role in the life of your child. The mentor is not a substitute parent, parole officer, moneylender, cool peer, or in any way someone to take your place. A Mentor is a: coach, guide, role model and friend.

Screening

Mentor prospects—as they are called before they are “matched” to Cadets—must go through a three-step screening process. All three steps are necessary for the Youth Challenge Program to get a whole picture of the mentor.

1. **Criminal Background Screening.** This is a nationwide check of the prospect’s criminal history. The Academy is responsible for paying for the initial background screening process. The results of the background screening are confidential and will not be discussed with anyone outside the prospect himself or herself. The process can end here if the prospect has a questionable background. Each time we have to run a new check on a mentor there will be a charge, so please choose your mentor carefully. **No refunds will be issued.**

2. **Reference Checks.** Each mentor prospect must submit two reference forms from someone who knows the mentor prospect well. The references should be sent to the Mentor Coordinator at the Youth Challenge Program. The process can end here if we do not receive these or receive questionable references.

Training

Mentor prospects are trained on Mentor Day at Camp Blanding. Training times are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This training explains the “how” and “why” of being a mentor and gives the tools necessary to do it well for the youths while in the Challenge program. The training takes place in the first half of Mentor Day. The second half of the day is spent learning to relate to the Cadet in a new, more insightful way. Because this training is interactive and involves the cadet, the prospect must attend the training at Camp Blanding. The Mentor and Cadet must be background screened, trained, and matched by week 13. **Mentor training and the matching ceremony are mandatory events for the Cadet to be eligible for graduation.**

Matching

Mentor prospects become mentors when they are matched to Cadets (mentees as they are called by Mentors). This ceremony also takes place on Mentor Day once training is complete. The ceremony is formal and involves the reading of a contract between the two parties, an exchange of pins (from Cadet) and ribbons (from Mentor), and an address by the Director. Once the matching ceremony is complete, the pairs spend the afternoon together on-campus, engaged in structured and unstructured activities.

Visitation

Once matched, mentors are allowed to visit the Cadets on Sundays and Tuesdays. The Mentors cannot bring anyone else with them. Mentors must call on Thursday to schedule a visit. The Case Manager must approve these visits before the mentor is granted visitation. All rules about contraband still apply. **The Mentor cannot bring food or drinks to the Cadet or take him or her off campus. All mentor questions should be directed to the Mentor Coordinator at 904-559-1726 extension 4028.**

Program Outline

The program is outlined below in weeks to give parents some insight on what the Cadets are focusing on while at the Academy. The program concentrates on the following:

- 1) Physical conditioning and attitude; the Academy will assess the individual Candidate/Cadet for suitability in the program.
- 2) Education of the whole person by using the eight core components of ChalleNGe; every training activity is directly related to self-improvement.
- 3) Application of the skills developed during the residential program in real situations such as job seeking, budgeting, social skills, etc.

The Eight Core Components

1) **Academic Excellence:** Classroom studies at the Academy are designed to enhance each Cadet's educational skill and instill a desire to continue self-improvement throughout life. The main subject areas taught are math, science, social studies, writing skills, and reading improvement. Each Cadet must take the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) upon entry into and again near the end of residential phase. The Academy will make arrangements for Cadets who qualify to take the General Educational Development (GED) test. The Cadets who have scored high enough on the first GED test and TABE, meet the age restrictions, and are in good behavioral standing with no disciplinary action pending may be eligible for the Dual Enrollment program.

2) **Life Coping Skills:** The Cadet will identify negative attitudes and values, which he or she displays, and then, with the assistance of the Academy staff, explore ways to change that negative behavior to positive thinking and respect for others and themselves. Included in this area are classes and social groups regarding anger management, stress management, bullying, team building skills, budgeting, and other related subjects, such as Conflict Resolution.

3) **Job Skills:** In this component, Cadets will develop the necessary basic skills to seek employment when they leave the Academy. He or she will develop goals, complete a written resume, fill out employment applications and learn how to conduct himself or herself properly while interviewing for a job.

4) **Health and Hygiene:** Cadets are taught the importance of understanding the positive correlation between good health and life-long mental, physical and emotional well-being. Classes in smoking cessation, nutrition and sexual responsibility are just a few topics covered in this area.

5) **Responsible Citizen:** Cadets will develop a better understanding of what makes a community strong and supportive of its citizens as well as factors that cause division and controversy. Cultural awareness, violence prevention, promoting justice, and the Honor Code are discussed in this area. This component also includes student government and voter registration.

6) **Service to Community:** Cadets will develop an understanding of the benefits of volunteering time and services to assist others in need and to maintain a clean, safe environment in which all citizens can live. This is hands-on experience performing Service to the Community in and around the State of Florida and with agencies such as Florida National Guard, Clay County School Board, and many other organizations.

7) **Leadership/Followership:** Each Cadet must learn to become a good follower (i.e. obeying commands, supporting fellow Cadets, etc.) When one demonstrates the skills of being a good follower, he or she will be provided the opportunity to demonstrate leadership skills. To accomplish these important skills, Cadets will participate in Drill and Ceremony, Drill competitions, Platoon competitions, and other character developing activities.

8) **Physical Fitness:** Cadets are required to participate in physical fitness training. Physical training not only improves overall physical health but also promotes mental and emotional well being. Improvements in this area will be tracked over the 22- week residential phase of the program. Activities include, but are not limited to, flexibility and strength training, one-mile runs and organized athletics.

Weekly Schedule Summary

Weeks 1-2

Acclimation Period is occurring during this time frame. Candidates are exposed to high physical demands and stressful mental situations. Candidates will be focusing on learning and practicing elementary military drill and ceremony, reciting the Cadet creed, understanding military customs and courtesies and adjusting to the quasi- military structure. Candidates will be evaluated to determine if this program is appropriate for their needs. They will also be taking the TABE test once again to determine what classes they will be placed in. It is imperative that Candidates do their best on this exam, as it will determine their educational schedule while here. Candidates must demonstrate a willingness to succeed and change in order to transition to Week 3 and the main phase of ChalleNGe.

The final day of the second week is the Rites of Passage ceremony during which, if determined eligible, they go from Candidate to Cadet. The ceremony is private and not open to family members. Candidates will write home and beg you to come get them. Parents/guardians be strong and tell them “NO.” Your strong support is vital during this early phase. The Cadet is monitored by both Cadre and the Counselors to help ease them through the demanding transition from home to the Academy. Do not give your child the easy way out by letting him or her quit.

Weeks 3-4

The Challenge phase begins Week 3. With this comes a change in focus. The Cadets now begin attending mandatory classes. There is no opportunity for them to “skip” class. Cadre monitors classes while the teachers are instructing. For the Cadets that didn’t show a disinterest in the first 2 weeks, now is usually the time. Many Cadets, especially those who have not been successful in school, do not react well to mandatory school attendance. It can be frustrating for those who

skipped school in the past because they now have to face how far behind they are and also that they are not as smart and tough as they would like their peers to think. As parents, please encourage your child and let them know that this is what they signed up for and sticking with it is the only way to succeed. This is a great time to remind them of the importance of their education.

Weeks 5-9

Those Cadets who have been misbehaving because of academic frustration begin to calm down and follow the program. Selections are made for off-campus community service and other activities. Because these activities present scheduling challenges, some cadets may be moved to another platoon. Cadets sometimes find this disruptive and may express their displeasure to you. Please be supportive of our practices and ensure them that this is a reasonable policy. Also Cadets are preparing for Family Day with a great deal of drill and ceremony being conducted on a daily basis.

This is the point where Cadets are beginning to turn the corner for their new lives. It is important to be supportive when you visit on Family Day so they can enjoy their success thus far. Be considerate of your Cadet by not presenting them with any upsetting distractions. Cadets remain excited from Family Day while adjusting back into the daily routine. Cadets should be fully engaged in any off-campus community service or training they are enrolled in. Be aware that the same Cadet code of conduct applies wherever the cadet may be. The students will be disciplined for offenses committed off-campus just as they would have they committed them on-campus. In many cases the punishment may be more intense because the reputation of the Academy has been put at risk by their behavior.

Week 10

During this week, the Cadets who have been the most challenged begin to show signs that they can no longer adapt to this environment. This is historically the time when the greatest numbers of Cadets are lost due to behavior problems. Encourage your Cadet through letters to maintain the high standards expected of them at all times.

Weeks 11-15

Often there is tightening down on the Cadets as many are now becoming rowdy and often exhibiting signs of cabin fever. Do not be surprised if some Cadets are moved to other platoons in an effort to diffuse some behavior disruptions. As the first placement pass is granted, look for the Cadet's Post Residential Action Plan (P-RAP) and review it with them. Since they have been matched with their mentor formally, please allow them to complete their 4.0-hour minimum Service to Community Project and to review this document with their Mentor. Also be aware of the placement pass assignment. It is mandatory! The placement pass assignment is due upon their return to the academy. Cadets are responsible for their own work.

Week 16

GED test results are coming back and Cadets who have passed begin to ignore other studies and take on a more arrogant tone. Cadets who did not pass may become downtrodden and feel left behind. No matter which category your child fits into, remember to be supportive and remind them how much they have accomplished in all areas of the program.

Weeks 17-20

These are the last weeks of formal GED classes and all vocational training. The second placement pass is granted at the end of Week 19. The Placement requirement must be completed by the end of week 17. The final exit TABE is given at this time to determine how far

academically the Cadet has progressed while in the program. This is a very stressful and busy time; continue to keep the letters coming.

Week 21

This is when Cadets act out the most. They also mistakenly believe that they will not be terminated for their unruly behavior. Cadets can be terminated up through graduation day. Placements must be firmly in place at this time and verification should have been turned in. Many field trips take place to keep the Cadets occupied as we realize that they definitely have cabin fever. We also know this is no excuse for unruly behavior.

Week 22

This week is full of recreational activities, award ceremonies, and work details. The Cadets need to be working to prepare the barracks for the next class, and turning in all supplies that belong to the Academy. There are also numerous graduation practices leading up to the big day.

Graduation Day

Tickets will be issued at the door on graduation beginning at 10:00 am on a first-come, first-served basis. Entrance to the ceremony will require a ticket for each adult and child! Please dress appropriately for a graduation ceremony. Mentor tickets are reserved seating and will be issued separately to only Mentors. No noisemakers, flowers in a vase, balloons, or signs will be allowed inside the facility.

Week 23 – Forward

Your child has a plan (P-RAP) mapped out. Use it to help them be successful. Cadets need to be busy with work/school/military immediately following graduation. The longer they wait to begin work/school/military, the less chance of success. Get them busy and keep them busy!

Class Academy Calendar

The Academy Calendar is an effort to inform you about some of the major events occurring during and at the Academy. This calendar along with letters received from home is tools you can use to gauge some of your child's reactions to his or her residency in the program. Please read all Academy information mailed to your home or handed out to you during placement passes. These will contain any calendar dates and updates. The following is a list explaining the events contained within the residential phase of the Academy. Please keep in mind these major events are subject to change. Candidates will be instructed to arrive at a pick up location the first morning at a specific time. Please be aware that no child is allowed to go to a different site than assigned without first contacting the Admissions Department. This day begins early and lasts until late Sunday evening. Ensure your child gets plenty of rest the night before. Breakfast is crucial, as the Candidates will be engaged in physical activity for the majority of the day.

Admission Day-RPM/ Admissions.....ajohnson@flyca.info

Admission Date: July 8, 2018

The TABE is the same exam all Cadets took as part of the admissions process. FLYCA gives the test again in order to determine a score. All Cadets are administered the same version of the exam. The Education Department uses the TABE score to determine what level of GED classes the Cadet requires and whether they may be eligible for off campus classes. It is extremely important that the Cadets do their best to score honestly.

Entrance TABE – Education July 16, 2018

An interdisciplinary team of Staff and Cadre evaluates cadets periodically. The Quad is comprised of the Program Coordinator, Commandant, and Lead Counselor. During this meeting the Cadet will hear feedback about their performance in all areas, including plans for placement after graduation.

Program Coordinator.....lcalderon@flyca.info

Commandant.....jvazquez@flyca.info

Lead Counselor.....gboneyharris@flyca.info

RPM Representative.....ajohnson@flyca.info

The ASVAB is the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery. This is offered as a tool for determining the skills and abilities of the Cadets. It is also used by the military to determine a Cadet's eligibility for a particular branch. Each branch has different criteria, including the score required. An ASVAB interpretation is done later in the month to explain to the Cadets what the score means. If your Cadet has military plans, send him/her an ASVAB study guide to use to study for the test.

ASVAB/Placement Coordinatorealexander@flyca.info

Military/Career Day is an opportunity for the different branches of the Armed Forces to inform Cadets about their particular branch. Before these presentations begin, the Cadets have already been briefed by FLYCA staff on the rules of recruiting and signing up for the military here at FLYCA.

Military/Career Day.....ealexander@flyca.info

SGA stands for Student Government Association. The Cadets elect an Executive Branch comprised of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. They also elect a Legislative Branch, which consists of Platoon Senators and a Senate President.

SGA – Point of Contact.....gboneyharris@flyca.info

Rites of Passage is an important day where Candidates become Cadets; no families, friends or mentors, only invited graduated Cadets can attend.

Rites of Passage- Point of Contact.....lcalderon@flyca.info

Rites of Passage Day- July 21, 2018

Family Day

Family Day is an opportunity for you and your friends and family to visit your Cadet while he or she is in the Residential Phase. The event is scheduled from 8:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. on the grounds of Florida Youth Challenge Academy. There will be a competitive performance of drill and ceremony by your Cadet’s platoon followed by an awarding of the guideon streamer. There are campus tours available and all staff and cadre will be present for you to meet and ask questions. Food is available to purchase by guests. Families may bring food to eat but may not cook on campus. Sterno burners are allowed to reheat pre-cooked food. Cadets are not allowed to leave the campus for any reason on this day. Contraband will not be allowed on campus, including smoking by family and friends. Please abide by campus rules to make this a memorable day for all. You will receive specific information prior to this event. Family, friends, and Mentors are highly encouraged to attend. No terminated Cadets are allowed to attend this event.

Family Day – August 18, 2018

Placement Pass

Placement Pass is when Cadets are required to go on two Placement Home Passes during the 5-½ month program. Transportation is provided to Cadets in South and Central Florida as well as Panhandle area. Pick up for Cadets living in the local area or whose families did not get a bus ride for transportation is done at the Academy. **While on placement pass Cadets are not allowed to have any tattoos or body piercing done to their bodies; this will result in termination from the program. Cadets must complete the homework assignment for placement requirements. Failure to complete homework assignment will result in loss in Level of Excellence (LOE) by the Commandant until completed.** Upon their return to the Academy, a drug test will be administered and Cadets will be thoroughly searched. Specific information is provided prior to placement.

FLYCA 1st & 2nd Placement Pass Weekend- RPM Placement & Counseling

Placement Coordinator.....ealexander@flyca.info

Placement Pass Coordinator.....jhoening@flyca.info

First Placement Pass – October 3-7, 2018

Second Placement Pass – November 21-25, 2018

Mentor Training

Mentor Days are filled with training for the mentors and the opportunity for the Cadet to share his or her experiences with their mentor since coming to the Youth Challenge. Mentors must attend one of the three dates listed. Mentors will be notified of times and details of the day once they have passed the screening process. Once the mentor receives the acceptance letter, they will not receive any other information until one week prior to the mentor day they have chosen.

Mentor Training is for Mentors only; no one else may attend (to include parents/guardians).

Mentor Coordinator.....ptanner@flyca.info

First Mentor Training– August 4, 2018

Second Mentor Training – August 25, 2018

Third Mentor Training – September 15, 2018

Graduation Information

Graduation will be held at Thrasher-Horne Center, Orange Park, Florida. **Information pertaining to the graduation will be distributed in the 2nd Placement packages.** The ceremony begins early in the afternoon and lasts approximately 2 hours. Cadets will not be able to visit with their families until after the ceremony. Information regarding details of graduation will be sent out early in the class. It is recommended that hotel reservations be made well in advance if necessary. You will receive specific information prior to this event.

Graduation tickets are distributed the morning of graduation at Thrasher Horne Center.

Administration.....sbooth@flyca.info

Program Coordinator.....lcalderon@flyca.info

Graduation Day – December 11, 2018

Parent Challenge Workshop

Parent Challenge Workshops are conducted during the class cycles by the Counseling Department. Parent Challenge training is offered once at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center and once at locations in Central and Southern Florida. The training focuses on the changes that the youth experience and how parents can continue to support these changes in their child. The

training begins at 9:00 am and ends at 1:00 pm. Parents and Cadets will **not** see each other during this training. Information on the exact dates and locations will be sent out separately.

Parent Challenge Training, Palm Beach Gardens, FL- TBD

Parent Challenge Training, Orlando, FL – Orlando, FL- TBD

Parent Challenge Training, Camp Blanding, FL – TBD

Conduct/ Disciplinary Actions

Cadets are expected to conduct themselves in a mature and self-controlled manner at all times.

Military customs and courtesies dictate that subordinates show respect towards their superiors.

Cadets will follow military customs and courtesies while at the Academy. Cadets are required to address Director, Deputy Director, Commandant, First Sergeant, Cadre, Academy Staff and visitors as Sir or Ma'am. Cadets will be addressed as Cadet and last name (i.e. Cadet Smith).

Cadets will call "at ease" when Director, Deputy Director, Commandant, First Sergeant, Cadre, or Academy Staff, enters an area. Cadets will say the words "yes" or "no" when responding to questions that require that answer ("Yes, Sir or No, Ma'am") and will stand at parade rest when doing this.

The Academy will use several methods or tools to maintain Cadet Discipline. The Academy will not tolerate unacceptable behavior or flagrant disrespect. Physical exercise is the primary tool utilized to assist in maintaining discipline, which may be intense and physical as well as emotional. This type of corrective training is designed to be repetitious, strenuous and stressful, thus discouraging inappropriate behavior but is monitored by the First Sergeant, Platoon Sergeant and Cadre. This corrective type of physical training may be conducted individually or

in groups depending upon the situation not only to correct the behavior but also to instill pride within the group as a team building technique. Cadets that do not respond to this type of corrective action will be recommended to the Cadet Review Board for further disciplinary actions. **Cadets that perform any sexual contact with other Cadets whether female on male, male on male or female on female is automatic grounds for termination.** Cheeking and passing of medication by Cadets is prohibited and could result in termination, pending the outcome of the investigation. Cadets who violate State or Federal laws may be prosecuted by the local area law enforcement agencies, and/or terminated from the Academy.

Conduct contrary to the good order and discipline in the Academy, and all conduct that could bring discredit upon the Academy, will be disciplined according to the type and degree of the violation. There are many possible disciplinary actions that may be given for violations. The following, though not all- inclusive, are some of the methods used to discipline Cadets:

- 1) Warning/Reprimand (Spot Reports)
- 2) Corrective Action Physical Exercise (CAPE)
- 3) Restrictions to Certain Specified Limits
- 4) Commandant's List
- 5) Formal Counseling (Incident Report)
- 6) Denial of Privileges
- 7) Separation from FLYCA

The “**SPOT REPORT/INCIDENT REPORT**” is a means by which the Cadre records and reports minor and major violations of Academy rules and regulations. It can also be used as an Observation Report, or to report positive behaviors. The Cadet Platoon Sergeant will use the report to initiate disciplinary action when required. When appropriate, an On-The-Spot

correction will be performed by the Cadre for problems such as appearance, attitude and procedures. The corrections may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) Extra Instruction/Incentive Training
- 2) Verbal Counseling
- 3) Corrective Action Physical Exercise (CAPE)
- 4) Additional Duties
- 5) Documented Performance Related Counseling

The “**Exceed Standards**” SPOT REPORT is as follows:

- 1) Used to Recognize Positive Behavior
- 2) Document that the Cadet is Capable of Good Behavior
- 3) No Statement Required on the Form from Cadet

Cadet must sign the report. Refusal to accept responsibility for individual actions is in itself a disciplinary issue. Candidates/Cadets must accept the responsibility for his or her good or inappropriate behavior. If a serious incident occurs, the Cadre and or staff are required to fill out a Serious Incident Report. A Spot Report/Incident Report will also be completed indicating the violation of the Academy policies or behavior expectations. Corrective actions will be initiated on the severity of the violation to include possible release from the Academy. **The Director makes the final decision for all appeals regarding the termination of a Cadet.** Cadets who are retained by the Director are automatically assigned an action plan, unless otherwise indicated by the Director. Cadets who are dismissed by the Director are separated from the Academy at the earliest opportunity. The counselor for the respective Cadet will provide the information to parent/legal guardian regarding status. Parents/guardians are responsible for the transportation of their Cadets when terminated from the program.

Cadet Information

Below is information taken directly from the Cadet Handbook; this information is intended to help you better understand the daily life of your child and FLYCA's expectations of them. Over the past classes we have found that these are the most effective tools we have for establishing order and standards. Please support them by coaching your Cadet in the importance of believing in and maintaining them.

Cadet Code of Conduct

1) Gambling and use of vulgar and profane language is strictly prohibited.

2) The use of drugs, alcohol, and other intoxicating substances is strictly forbidden.

A. Bringing these products, having them in your possession, or returning to the Academy after having used them is not allowed.

B. Random drug testing is an ongoing part of this program. Cadets who test positive for illegal drugs will be dismissed from the program.

3) Cadets are not permitted to smoke or use tobacco products.

4) Zero Tolerance for Drugs policy:

A. Cadets are tested for illegal drugs upon entrance into the program, upon return from Placement Pass, and upon return from an excused absence from the program.

B. Random drug testing is an ongoing part of this program. The Director may conduct random drug testing anytime throughout the program.

C. For-cause drug testing: The Director may order a drug test for a Cadet who shows obvious signs of being under the influence of drugs or suspicion of the use of drugs.

D. Cadets who test positive for illegal drugs or a controlled substance without a prescription will be dismissed from the program.

5) Ammunition, firearms, and other weapons or explosives are not permitted. Under no circumstances will Cadets bring weapons or ammunition onto Academy grounds. Cadets will not be allowed to keep pocket knives or similar items.

A. Unauthorized weapon or weapons look-alike will be confiscated and turned over to the local authorities for disposition.

B. Bringing explosives to the campus, including fireworks, or causing them to be exploded is strictly forbidden, and any cadet involved will be dismissed from the program.

6) Cadets will not engage in commercial enterprise (i.e. selling products, etc.) without receiving permission from the Director.

7) Lending or borrowing money between Cadets or staff is strictly prohibited.

8) All literature of an unsuitable nature (i.e. pornographic, nude, provocative, drug culture, gangs) is prohibited.

The Honor Code

The Honor Code guides and directs the daily activities and actions of all students in FLYCA.

The most important element in the implementation of the Honor Code is for each Cadet to believe in the Code itself. Believing in and living by the Code will create a sense of trust and promote a higher standard of living for everyone. The Honor Code will be fully explained to the Cadets during the first week of Acclimation Period.

Cadet Creed

My basic obligations/duties are:

1. To follow orders to the best of my abilities and as quickly as possible.
2. To inform my cadre of any problems that I may have which need attention.
3. To respect the dignity, personal property and privacy of my fellow Cadets.
4. To be honest with my dealings with fellow Cadets and my cadre.

5. To speak in a respectful manner without using abusive and degrading language.
6. To not lie, cheat or steal or tolerate those that do.
7. To not engage in conduct prohibited by FLYCA policies.

General Rules

1. **Daily Schedule.** The daily training schedule will be posted in each barracks. Cadets must follow the published times for activities on the schedule. Absence or tardiness will not be tolerated. It is the responsibility of each Cadet to have the proper uniform and equipment for the scheduled activity, so be prepared. Wake up is normally at 0445 hours (4:45 am). Lights are normally out at 2045 hours (8:45 pm).
2. **Formations.** All formations will be announced and conducted per the instructions provided by the Cadre. Cadet's attendance at formation is mandatory. Formations are necessary for passing along information, conducting inspections, preparing for training, and getting ready to move from one location to another.
3. **Sick Call.** Cadets who are ill will report to their squad leader, complete a sick slip, and be told where and when to report for treatment.
4. **Mail.** Mail will be distributed daily during regular business days. Cadets are encouraged to write their family at least once per week. Cadets will not write to other Cadets in another platoon nor pass notes between or amongst themselves. Parents/guardians/family members are not permitted to send mail to Cadets in other platoons on behalf of their Cadet.
5. **Post Facilities.** All Post facilities and building areas are off-limits unless specific permission has been received or training is scheduled for that facility.
 - a. **Off-limits at all times:** POV parking area, fuel storage areas, female barracks for males and male barracks for females, and construction areas.

b. **Limited use**-Permission only: wooded areas, lake, training areas, other buildings or office spaces on campus.

6. **Laundry Call.** Cadets are responsible for their own laundry to include pillowcases and sheets. Pillowcases and sheets will be washed once a week, this is mandatory. Ample time is set aside for laundry call. Two washers and dryers are provided inside the barracks for washing of Cadet's PT uniform and towels only.

7. **Telephone Calls.** Telephones are provided for use on each platoon's scheduled time only. All phone calls are free. Phone calls are a maximum duration of ten minutes or as directed by the Cadre. Incoming calls are not accepted. Violation of phone privileges will result in suspension of phone privileges. Cadets can receive additional phone privileges during the class based on behavior.

8. **Leave** is absence from the program granted to Cadets for a variety of reasons (i.e., death of a family member). Passes are not authorized without prior approval from only the Director.

E-MAIL LIST

Headquarters/Placement Pass/Questions for Director.....sbooth@flyca.info
Program Coordinator.....lcalderon@flyca.info
Commandant.....jvazquez@flyca.info
Assistant Commandant.....rkillian@flyca.info
Lead Counselor.....gboneyharris@flyca.info
Counselors.....jjohnson@flyca.info
.....jhoening@flyca.info
.....mthomas@flyca.info
.....twaites@flyca.info
Medicalcseymour@flyca.info
.....mchesser@flyca.info
.....sclark@flyca.info
Educationsnordstorm@flyca.info
RPM Coordinator.....vacant
Mentor Coordinator.....ptanner@flyca.info
Placement Coordinatorealexander@flyca.info
Admissions Coordinator.....ajohnson@flyca.info
Recruiters.....rtyler@flyca.info
.....esantiago@flyca.info

Case Managers
.....jkay@flyca.info
.....aevans@flyca.info
.....jjameson@flyca.info
.....jclarke@flyca.info
Cadet Budget.....kcrowe@flyca.info
Graduation.....sbooth@flyca.info
Cadet Mail.....floridayouthchallengeacademy.org

ACADEMY PHONE LIST

Main Number is 904-559-1726 extensions are below

Administration/Director/Deputy Director	4000
Program Coordinator	3027
Commandant	3584
Operations (Available 24 hours during class session).....	3042
Counseling Department	2170
.....	4039
.....	4021
.....	4022
.....	4006
RPM Coordinator.....	4002
Admissions.....	4017/4033
Recruiter.....	4029/4535
Placement Coordinator.....	4032
Mentor Coordinator.....	4028
Case Managers	4049
.....	4019
.....	4017
.....	4031
.....	4018
Medical.....	4009
Education.....	904-410-0364